Amendments to the Claims:

This claim listing will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Claim Listing:

1. (Currently amended) A modified CpG-containing phosphorothioate oligonucleotide for inhibiting specific gene expression with reduced side effects, ~~the modification consisting of a modified~~ wherein all CpG dinucleotides present in the oligonucleotide are modified, wherein the oligonucleotide is complementary to a portion of a genomic region or gene for which inhibition of expression is desired, or to RNA transcribed from such a gene, and wherein the modified CpG [[is]] comprises a 2'-O-substituted CpG.

2. (canceled)

3. (Currently amended) A method for providing a CpG-containing phosphorothioate oligonucleotide with reduced side effects of splenomegaly and depletion of platelets when administered to a mammal, comprising administering to the mammal an oligonucleotide ~~comprising a modified~~ wherein all CpG dinucleotides present in the oligonucleotide are modified, wherein the oligonucleotide is complementary to a portion of a genomic region or gene for which inhibition of expression is desired, or to RNA transcribed from such a gene, and wherein the modified CpG is selected from the group consisting of alkylphosphonate CpG, phosphotriester CpG, stereospecific phosphorothioate CpG, phosphoramidate CpG, inverted CpG and 2'-5' CpG.

4. (Currently amended) A method for providing a CpG-containing phosphorothioate oligonucleotide with reduced side effects to an individual with a disease caused by aberrant gene expression, the method comprising administering to an individual having the disease an oligonucleotide ~~comprising a modified~~ wherein all CpG dinucleotides present in the oligonucleotide are modified, wherein the oligonucleotide is complementary to a portion of a genomic region or gene that is aberrantly expressed, or to RNA transcribed from such a gene, and wherein the modified CpG is selected from the group consisting of alkylphosphonate CpG, phosphotriester CpG, stereospecific phosphorothioate CpG, phosphoramidate CpG, inverted CpG and 2'-5' CpG.

5. (Currently amended) A method for reducing side effects of a CpG-containing phosphorothioate oligonucleotide administered to a mammal, comprising:

(a) providing a modified CpG-containing phosphorothioate oligonucleotide wherein all the CpG dinucleotides present in the oligonucleotide are modified, and ~~having a~~ wherein the modified CpG ~~modification~~ is selected from the group consisting of alkylphosphonate CpG, inverted CpG, stereospecific phosphorothioate CpG, phosphotriester CpG, phosphoramidate CpG, and 2'-5' CpG; and

(b) administering the modified CpG-containing phosphorothioate oligonucleotide to the mammal,

wherein administration of the modified CpG-containing phosphorothioate oligonucleotide results in fewer side effects than the administration of an unmodified CpG-containing phosphorothioate oligonucleotide.

6. – 15. (canceled)

16. (Currently amended) A method for providing a CpG-containing phosphorothioate oligonucleotide with reduced side effects of splenomegaly and depletion of platelets when administered to a mammal, comprising administering to the mammal ~~a modified~~ an oligonucleotide ~~wherein the modification consists of a modified~~ wherein all CpG dinucleotides present in the oligonucleotide are modified, wherein the oligonucleotide is complementary to a portion of a genomic region or gene for which inhibition of expression is desired, or to RNA transcribed from such a gene, and wherein the modified CpG [[is]] comprises a 2'-O-substituted CpG.

17. (Currently amended) A method for providing CpG-containing phosphorothioate oligonucleotide with reduced side effects to an individual with a disease caused by aberrant gene expression, the method comprising administering to an individual having the disease ~~a modified~~ an oligonucleotide ~~wherein the modification consists of a modified~~ wherein all CpG dinucleotides present in the oligonucleotide are modified, wherein the oligonucleotide is complementary to a portion of a genomic region or gene that is aberrantly expressed, or to RNA transcribed from such a gene, and wherein the modified CpG [[is]] comprises a 2'-O-substituted CpG.

18. (Currently amended) A method for reducing side effects of a CpG-containing phosphorothioate oligonucleotide administered to a mammal, comprising:

(a) providing a modified CpG-containing phosphorothioate oligonucleotide wherein all the CpG dinucleotides present in the oligonucleotide are modified, and wherein the ~~modification~~ modified CpG ~~consists of~~ comprises a 2'-O-substituted CpG ~~modification~~; and

(b) administering the modified CpG-containing phosphorothioate oligonucleotide to the mammal,

wherein administration of the modified CpG-containing phosphorothioate oligonucleotide results in fewer side effects than the administration of an unmodified CpG-containing phosphorothioate oligonucleotide.